

## Three Little Words

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Summary: A challenge response which gives an overview of Jubilee's past... and future.

## Three Little Words

[Challenge] Three Little Words... (PG)Disclaimer: Any characters you recognise belong to Marvel. They're not mine, I'm just playing with them for a little while. I promise to put them back when I'm finished.Rated PG, for some violence and some subtle references to sex...

This is a response to the "three little words" challenge on OTL. I was trying for a response to Alara's anti-Valentine challenge, but this is what I got instead. Muses, sheesh.

Feedback: Please.

Three Little Words 1/1.By Rossi. [Rossi@subreality.com](mailto:Rossi@subreality.com)

"Are you ready?" Jubilation Lee looked up at her gymnastics coach with mischievous blue eyes. Her wide grin was answer in itself. With an answering smile, Keiko Matsubayashi patted her young student on the shoulder, and gave her a gentle push towards the parallel bars. At ten, Jubilee was tiny, a fragile-looking China doll of a child, but she flew through the air as fearlessly as any bird, her small hands grasping the bars with a sureness beyond her years. Jubilee was indeed a natural gymnast, Keiko thought as she watched her prize pupil make a landing that was marred only by a small wobble. Applause filled the large room as Jubilee beamed proudly, seeking out her parents in the front row. It was a moment the young girl would always remember...

"Are you ready, yet?" Cynjen hissed at Jubilee from where she was keeping look out, "I think someone's coming."

"Just a sec," Jubilee muttered, more to herself than to her best friend. Patiently she twisted the piece of wire in the lock of the

arcade's "Streetfighter" game, until she was at last rewarded by a soft click and the plate swinging open. Coins poured out, reminding Jubilee of a poker machine jackpot as she held her shirt under the flow. "Hey! What's going on over there? What are you girls doing?" shouted an man's voice, far too close for comfort. "RUN!!" CynJen shrieked, bolting towards Jubilee. "Quick, the back way!" Jubilee pulled CynJen towards the rear door of the arcade, her other hand cradling the coins in her shirt. She was grinning madly, exhilaration in her eyes as they fled giggling down the staff corridor.

"Are you ready?" It was more of a command than a question, Jubilee reflected as she and five other "new fish" followed the guard down the drab corridor to the main detention unit. Their footsteps echoed loudly, and the sniffing of Debbie, the weepy, skinny girl with the buck teeth who trailed along at the end of their little procession, was magnified tenfold. It was all Jubilee could do to grit her teeth and not scream at the girl to blow her nose, for Gawd's sake. As they entered the detention centre, she ignored the catcalls and whistles of the other inmates with equal stoicism. Nine months detention. Here. Inwardly her stomach churned at the thought, but Jubilee kept her chin up. No way she was gonna show weakness in front of these scum, guard and prisoner alike.

"'R ya ready, kid?" the voice was rough with pain, but Jubilee set her jaw and gripped her stolen knife in hands that shook only a little. Carefully she sliced away the ropes that bound Wolverine to the rude "X" cross. He collapsed to the ground with a grunt, and despite the terrible torture inflicted on him by the Reavers, Jubilee could see him straining to stand on his own. She slipped her arm around him, letting him use her shoulder as leverage, almost exclaiming despite herself at the massive weight of the man. He wasn't much taller than her...

"Are you ready, Jubilation?" Storm's voice rang through the empty Danger Room over the loudspeakers. Swallowing her fear, Jubilee nodded, bracing herself for whatever the Shi'ar technology could throw at her. Tentacles flew at her from all directions out of the walls, and she ducked and rolled clear, blasting them with her fireworks as she went. Then the floor disappeared from under her, and she was forced to leap upwards, grabbing the useless dangling arms of the tentacles she'd already immobilised. Her old gymnastic routines resurfaced, and she swung across the room like a squirrel, the yellow coat flapping behind her. Above, in the observation deck, Storm nodded to Wolverine. "Very well, the child has proved your confidence in her. She can stay with the X-Men." "Th' outcome was never in doubt," Logan growled at her, but pride shone in his eyes as he watched his protégé avoiding the traps thrown at her by the room.

"The cab's here. Are you ready?" A strangely subdued Bobby stood in the doorway of her room. Jubilee nodded, not trusting herself to speak just yet. Wordlessly, Bobby grabbed her suitcases, while Jubilee swung her carry-on bag over her shoulder. They trooped down the stairs to the hall, where the rest of the team was assembled. Not even the firecracker's famed smart-ass attitude to withstand saying goodbye to the people she'd come to see as family. Tears streamed down her face as she made her farewells, even giving Bobby a hug. Neither of them noticed the notes each had stuck to the other's back saying "Kick Me" until much later. "Well, later dudes," Jubilee waved from the bottom of the front steps. "Take care of Wolvie for me, if

he comes back." "Take care of yourself," Jean replied, smiling through the tears welling in her eyes. As the cab pulled away down the drive, Jubilee stuck her head out of the window and waved madly until the group on the front porch was indistinguishable in the distance.

"Are you ready, children?" Emma Frost's voice cut through their chatter effortlessly. Perhaps the fact she'd "echoed" it telepathically helped. "We're ready for whatever ya want ta throw at us!" Jubilee declared, snapping her ever-present gum, her arms crossed over the front of the red and gold Generation X uniform. The White Queen eyed her in a way that was designed to squelch the toughest 'tude. Jubilee returned the glare with interest. "Ahem, today's exercise will be a game o' cat an' mouse," Sean Cassidy interrupted nervously, not liking where this was headed. "One o' ye will be th' cat, th' rest will be th' mice. Ye get caught, ye're out o' th' game." "Sounds like a game for the ninos, no?" Skin asked mockingly. "Did we mention the cat is the only one allowed to use powers?" Emma purred at him, looking herself like the cat that has swallowed the canary. "Eeep."

"So, Jubilee, are you ready to tell me what I wish to know?" Bastion sneered at the small figure bowed under the weight of manacles and a virtual reality helmet.

"Bite me."

"Ah, I see our last "lesson" hasn't stayed with you. It looks like we'll have to go through it again." Bastion pushed a series of buttons on the panel at which he sat. On the television screen, Jubilee shrieked as she saw Wolverine chained to the wall, helpless to save her, saw the lasers which slowly cut him to pieces before her eyes, heard his dying screams...

Bastion smiled as the last X-Man collapsed to her knees, sobbing and shaking.

"You sure you're ready for this?" Jubilee sighed.

"C'mon Ev, we've both been waitin' for this for the last year..." she declared, taking his face in her small hands and looking him straight in the eyes. "We're both over eighteen, an' we've been datin' for a year. I know I'm ready." She kissed him deeply, wrapping her arms around his neck. She could feel him trembling slightly, or was it her? Pressing her body against his so tightly, it was hard to be sure...

"Ya ready darlin'?" Logan knocked gently at Jubilee's door. She opened it with a brilliant smile, and not for the first time Logan found himself thinking that his Jubes had grown up into a stunning young woman.

"Seems like people have been askin' me that all my life," she replied, ushering him into the room she shared with Paige. It was a shambles of half-packed boxes and suitcases. Logan smiled as he watched her adjust the mortarboard on her shining black hair, the tassel hanging jauntily over one eye. "Well, how do I look?"

"Perfect, darlin'. Ya turned out real beautiful." Jubilee blushed

prettily, and then flung herself into lagan's arms like the irrepressible kid she'd been for so long.

"Ya proud of me, Wolvie?" she whispered, her voice cracking a little. She felt Logan's arms tighten around her.

"I'm as proud as any man could be of his daughter," he whispered back. When they separated, Jubilee's eyes were overflowing, and Logan's were suspiciously bright. Gently, he dabbed away her tears with his handkerchief, and straightened the mortarboard which had been knocked askew.

"So, are ya ready ta graduate?" he asked with a grin.

"As ready as I've ever been for anythin'."

The End.

End  
file.